

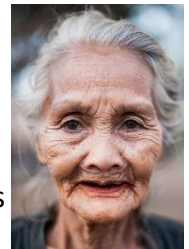


What strange things memories are; we remember things we want to forget and we forget things we wish to remember! Sometimes I go upstairs to fetch something and when I get there I cannot remember what I went upstairs to fetch. The annoying thing is, I wait there for a while, come back downstairs empty-handed, sit down on the settee and then I remember why it was that I went upstairs!

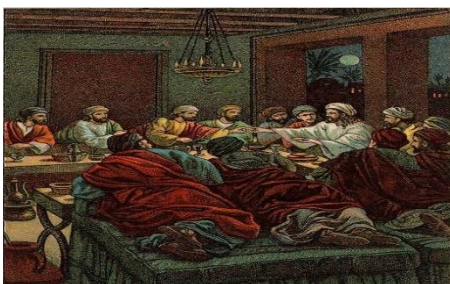
**NOW -****NOW -****NOW -****NOW -****NOW -**

Have you noticed that we often start our sentences with, 'Now' when we are trying to remember something? We say things like, 'Now – What was his name?', 'Now – When did I last do this?', 'Now – How was I told to do that?'

I suppose that forgetting is part of getting older - at least that is what my cheeky son tells me; mind you, I have told him that his turn will come! The other point I have noticed though, is that we forget things when we are on overload and trying to do too much. It is as if our minds can only take in so much and then they blot out, which is partly how God protects us.



As we are coming up to Easter I began thinking about Holy Communion. (Mass, Sacrament, Lord's Supper) There are various opinions as to whom should be allowed to take Holy Communion. Some limit it to those who are members of their particular denomination and some say that it is only available to those who have taken part in a certain ceremony. There are others who say that it should not be given to children under a certain age. Probably one of the most controversial thoughts is if it should only be given to those who are Christians.



Jesus gave the bread and wine to His twelve disciples in the evening, just before He was taken to the High Priest. He used these simple everyday emblems to ask His disciples to remember Him after His death; although the significance of His actions would not become clear to them until some time later.

Many people were crucified at that time so why was the death of Jesus any different from that of dozens of others who died in the

same way? Jesus came down to earth with the express purpose of making a way for us to be forgiven for the things that we have done and said wrong. As we are, we are not able to enter into the presence of a holy God when our lives on earth are over. By His death Jesus said, "Sorry" to God on our behalf so that we are able to have a 'clean slate'. The bread and wine are symbols of His body and blood as He died for each one of us and it is His death that He asks us to remember as we receive the bread and wine. It is not too difficult for any of us to do, not expensive and not complicated in any way. Jesus is a very practical person when it comes to asking us to do things and He always makes possible for what He asks to be feasible and within our limits.

I wrote earlier that the disciples would not realise the significance of the actions of Jesus on that particular evening. I wonder if we too are unable to fully realise that significance? The thought of someone deliberately allowing himself to be put to death in that terrible way can sometimes be overwhelming as we think of that tremendous love. There is even more than the physical side to this. Far worse for Jesus would have been the taking on of our sins and wrongdoings in His Spirit. He was perfect and blameless but was prepared to have that time of spiritual separation from His Father God, for you and me. The eating of a piece of bread and the drinking of a sip of wine seems almost too simple to help us to remember the cost of what Jesus went through.

Some questions for you to think about

Who should be able to take communion? Jesus originally gave it to a group of Christians; does this mean that only Christians should be allowed to take part? Are we able to judge who is a Christian and who is not? It is interesting to note that Jesus did not make any stipulations or limits as He shared that bread and wine; in fact, He gave it to one of the disciples whom we may think should not have even been included! Should it be something that is completely open for anyone who wishes to take part, regardless of denomination, age, church attendance or a 'Christian' label? Can it sometimes be a means of drawing people into God's presence and giving them a desire to make a commitment that they had not previously made? Holy Communion is something that is extremely precious so we need to be very careful neither to abuse it or to prevent its use and readers may probably be divided and hold diverse opinions concerning the above questions.

I might forget what I have gone upstairs to fetch or I might forget someone's name, but, I know one thing for certain and that is that I will always remember the name of Jesus and what He has done for me.



'The Lord Jesus, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way also the cup after supper saying, "This cup is the New Covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you shall drink it, in remembrance of Me." (1 Corinthians 11: 23 – 25)